

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-20

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3817

INFO AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN

AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN

AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN

CINCLANT NORVA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 3 KINGSTON 0290/1

CINCLANT FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, JM

SUBJ: MANLEY AT TWO YEARS

1. SUMMARY: AT THE END OF TWO YEARS, PM MANLEY CAN POINT TO VERY FEW ACCOMPLISHMENTS. MOST OF HIS ELECTORAL PROMISES HAVE COME TO NAUGHT WHICH INDICATES THAT HIS PARTY WAS NOT WELL PREPARED FOR ASSUMING POWER IN 1972. WHILE THE POPULARITY OF THE PNP HAS MOST PROBABLY DECLINED IN RECENT MONTHS DUE TO RISING PRICES AND DETERIORATING SERVICES, MANLEY IS STILL FIRMLY IN CHARGE AND FACES NO SERIOUS CHALLENGES TO HIS LEADERSHIP. THE OPPOSITION IS IN ALMOST COMPLETE DISARRAY AND WILL PROBABLY REMAIN SO FOR THE NEXT SEVERAL YEARS. THE FUTURE IS GRIM AT THIS POINT AND, WHILE MANLEY HAS THUS FAR BEEN COOL UNDER PRESSURE, HE MAY NOT REMAIN SO FOR LONG. IT IS CLEAR THAT THE ENERGY CRISIS HAS ADDED A SPECIAL URGENCY TO THE NECESSITY OF OBTAINING A LARGER TAKE FROM THE
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BAUXITE/ALUMINA INDUSTRY AS THE GOJ HAS NO OTHER POTENTIAL FOR

INCREASING ITS FOREIGN EXCHANGE EARNINGS IN ORDER TO COVER ITS INCREASED ENERGY BILL. END SUMMARY.

2. IN LESS THAN TWO MONTHS THE SECOND YEAR OF THE ADMINISTRATION OF PM MICHAEL MANLEY AND HIS PEOPLES NATIONAL PARTY GOVT WILL COME TO A CLOSE. TAKING OFFICE IN AN ATMOSPHERE OF GREAT EXPECTATION IN MAR 1972, THE MANLEY GOVT PROMISED TO BRING ABOUT "CHANGE" IN JAMAICA AND TO PROVIDE A BETTER LIFE FOR ALL, NOT MERELY BY TAKING FROM THE RICH BUT BY MAKING THE ECONOMIC POT BIGGER. EXPECTATIONS WERE SO HIGH THAT MANY ORDINARY CITIZENS BELIEVED THAT THEIR LOT WOULD BECOME BETTER OVERNIGHT. MANLEY SET ABOUT TO REFORM THE EDUCATION SYSTEM, REDISTRIBUTE WEALTH, ESTABLISH AN INDEPENDENT FOREIGN POLICY, GET A BETTER DEAL FROM THE BAUXITE/ALUMINA INDUSTRY, MAKE JAMAICA MORE SELF-SUFFICIENT IN AGRICULTURE AND MANUFACTURING, CONTROL CRIME, AND ESTABLISH A SOCIETY BASED ON SOCIAL JUSTICE, ETC. FORWARD MOVEMENT ON THE FORWARDING WAS TO HAVE RESULTED IN A GRADUAL IMPROVEMENT OF THE LOT OF THE "SUFFERERS" - THAT GREAT MASS OF THE JAMAICAN POPULATION THAT DOES NOT PARTICIPATE SIGNIFICANTLY IN THE MODERN ASPECTS OF JAMAICAN LIFE.

3. WHEN THE RECORD OF MANLEY'S FIRST TWO YEARS IS EXAMINED, THE ACTUAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS ARE SPOTTY.

4. EDUCATION: THE GOVERNMENT IS IMPLEMENTING A PROGRAM OF FREE SECONDARY EDUCATION - FOR THOSE WHO CAN QUALIFY ACADEMICALLY. THERE HAS BEEN LITTLE EXPANSION IN THE NUMBER OF PLACES AVAILABLE IN THE SCHOOL SYSTEM, HOWEVER, AND VIRTUALLY NO IMPROVEMENT IN THE QUALITY OF INSTRUCTION OR OF THE SCHOOL GRADUATES. WHILE FREE SECONDARY EDUCATION IS A DESIREABLE THING, ITS EFFECT ON JAMAICAN SOCIETY WILL NOT BE FELT FOR SOME TIME. AND THE ENTIRE SYSTEM IS UNDER SEVERE PRESSURE FROM THE GROWING SCHOOL-AGE POPULATION.

5. REDISTRIBUTION OF WEALTH: IN THIS ARE MANLEY'S SUCCESS HAS BEEN MIXED. THE LAND REVALUATION SCHEME BEFUND LAST YEAR AND THE IMMEDIATE INCREASE IN THE PROPERTY TAX WERE REFLECTED IN SIGNIFICANT INCREASES IN GOVT REVENUES. SOME INCREASED IN INCOME TAX COLLECTIONS ALSO TOOK PLACE AND, WHILE IMPOSITION OF EXCISE TAXES ON SUCH LUXURY ITEMS AS AUTOMOBILES INCREASED THE TAXES PAID BY THE WEALTHY, IMPORT QUOTAS HAVE REDUCED GOVT REVENUE.

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UES IN SOME AREAS. THERE HAS BEEN NO FUNDAMENTAL TRANSFER OF RESOURCES WITHIN JAMAICA BUT CONSIDERABLE AWAY FROM.

6. FOREIGN AFFAIRS: MANLEY HAS CARRIED OUT HIS PROMISES TO ESTABLISH DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH CUBA AND THE PRC. THERE HAS BEEN CONSIDERABLE TRAVEL BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES OF JAMAICA AND CUBA, BUT LITTLE IN THE WAY OF CONCRETE DECISIONS ON TRADE, ASSISTANCE OR EVEN THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A DIPLOMATIC MISSION IN HAVANA. MANLEY

HAS TRIED TO PLAY A LEADERSHIP ROLE IN THIRD WORLD COUNCILS AND, ACCORDING TO HIM, HAS SUCCEEDED IN SELLING JAMAICA'S LINE - THE THIRD WORLD MUST UNITE AGAINST THE METROPOLITAN COUNTRIES. MANLEY STILL CONTINUES TO BELIEVE STRONGLY IN THIRD WORLD SELF-HELP BUT, THUS FAR, APPARENTLY HAS FAILED TO UNDERSTAND THAT MOST OF THE WEALTHIER THIRD WORLD NATIONS ARE OBLIVIOUS TO THE PROBLEMS SUFFERED BY THEIR "BROTHERS" - PARTICULARLY WITH REGARD TO THE FUEL PRICE PROBLEM. AT THE SAME TIME, MANLEY HAS CAREFULLY AND CORDIALLY MAINTAINED HIS RELATIONS WITH THE US, UK AND CANADA, ACUTELY AWARE THAT JAMAICA'S PROSPERITY AND FUTURE DEVELOPMENT ARE DEPENDENT ON THE METROPOLITAN POWERS.

7. BAUXITE/ALUMINA: CAMPAIGN PROMISES AND PERSONAL PREFERENCES NOT WITHSTANDING, MANLEY AND HIS GOVT HAVE BEEN VERY SLOW IN

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CINCLANT NORVA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 3 KINGSTON 0290/2

CINCLANT FOR POLAD

TACKLING THE BAUXITE INDUSTRY. THIS IS NOT FOR ANY LACK OF PHILOSOPHICAL ZEAL, BUT RATHER BECAUSE THE GOVT DOES NOT POSSESS THE

HUMAN AND TECHNICAL RESOURCES TO MAKE CAREFULLY REASONED PLANS AS A BASIS FOR DIFFICULT NEGOTIATIONS. IT IS MAINLY BECAUSE OF THE ENERGY CRISIS AND A PENDING ECONOMIC CRISIS THAT THE BAUXITE COMMISSION, ECONOMIC COUNCIL AND OTHER AGENCIES INVOLVED HAVE BEEN PRODDED INTO PUTTING TOGETHER A PACKAGE (SEPTELS). IT IS LIKELY THAT CONSIDERABLE CONFUSION WILL RESULT AS THE VARIOUS FACTIONS WITHIN THE COUNTRY ARGUE THEIR POSITIONS VIS-A-VIS THE INDUSTRY, WITH THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY CONTINUING TO ACT AS A RESTRAINT ON THE MOVES OF THE GOVT BECAUSE OF ITS RELIANCE ON FOREIGN CAPITAL.

8 AGRICULTURE: MANLEY HAS MADE A PERSONAL EFFORT TO INTEREST HIS HIS COUNTRYMEN IN CULTIVATING THE LAND. HIS PROGRAMS OF LAND REDISTRIBUTION, HOWEVER, WILL PROBABLY RESULT IN A FURTHER FRAGMENTATION AND DECLINE IN EFFICIENCY. HIS EFFORTS TO RATION-
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ALIZE THE SUGAR INDUSTRY MAY PAY OFF IN THE FUTURE, BUT WILL PROBABLY REQUIRE A PAINFUL WRENCHING IF THE COMMONWEALTH SUGAR AGREEMENT IS TAMPERED WITH IN ANY SIGNIFICANT WAY. HE HAS NOT SUCCEEDED IN INCREASING PRODUCTIVITY TO ANY NOTICABLE DEGREE AND IS STILL DISATISFIED WITH THE PRICES RECEIVED FOR JAMAICAN EXPORT COMMODITIES. HE IS PROBABLY SOUND, HOWEVER, IN PLACING EMPHASIS ON AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT BOTH TO REDUCE DEPENDENCE ON FOREIGN SOURCES AND TO INCREASE EXPORT EARNINGS.

9. BUSINESS SECTOR: WITH A VERY FEW EXCEPTIONS, MANLEY'S IMPACT ON THE BUSINESS AND MANUFACTURING SECTORS HAS BEEN UNHEALTHY IN TERMS OF OVERALL PRODUCTIIN AND CAPITAL INVESTMENT. SOME OF HIS EARLY STATEMENTS AND THOSE OF SEVERAL OF HIS CLOSEST ADVISORS KEPT TH BUSINESS COMMUNITY ON A KNIFE EDGE FOR THE FIRST 18 MONTHS OF HIS ADMINISTRATION. BUSINESSMEN HAVE BEEN RELUCTANT TO INVEST, FOREIGN CAPITAL HAS BEEN WARY AND CONSIDERABLE CAPITAL HAS PROBABLY LEFT THE ISLAND. SINCE HIS RETURN FROM ALGIERS IN SEPT., HOWEVER, HE HAS MADE FEW PUBLIC APPEARANCES, AND FEWER PROMISES, WITH THE RESULT THAT CONFIDENCE HAS RETURNED TO SOME DEGREE. THIS MAY BE A SIGN OF MATURATION ON THE PART OF MANLEY AND HIS GOVT AND A REALIZATION OF THE VITAL NECESSITY OF KEEPING THE PRIVATE SECTOR MOVING AT A GOOD CLIP.

10. CRIME: ON CRIME CONTROL MANLEY HAS HAD MIXED SUCCESS . STATISTICS CAN BE MISLEADING AND FEW ARE AVAILABLE. A READING OF THE DAILY PRESS GIVES AN ALARMING PICTURE OF VIOLENT CRIME BUT THE SITUATION HAS PROBABLY NOT CHANGED A GREAT DEAL IN THE TWO YEARS. MANLEY HAS MADE PROMISES BUT IS HAMPERED BY A SEVERE SHORTAGE OF QUALIFIED PERSONNEL IN ALL FIELDS, INCLUDING LAW ENFORCEMENT - A SITUATION WHICH WILL PROBABLY NOT CHANGE MUCH FOR THE BETTER UNTIL THE EDUCATION SYSTEM PRODUCES A HIGHER QUALITY GRADUATE.

11. UNIMPRESSIVE RECORD: THE FOREGOING DOES NOT ADD UP TO AN IMPRESSIVE RECORD OF ACHIEVEMENT FOR MANLEY'S FIRST TWO YEARS, NOR

DOES IT INDICATE THAT MUCH WILL BE ACHIEVED IN THE REMAINING THREE YEARS OF HIS TERM. WHEN THIS PROPOSITION WAS BROACHED TO A LEADING JAMAICAN INTELLECTUAL, HOWEVER, HE RESPONDED THAT THE PNP GOVT HAS GIVEN "HOPE" FOR THE FIRST TIME TO MANY JAMAICANS WHO WERE SUFFERING FROM DESPAIR. IF TRUE, THIS IS COMMENDABLE, BUT HARDLY THE KIND OF THING ON WHICH A NATION CAN SUBSIST FOR LONG. WHILE IT MUST BE ACKNOWLEDGED THAT MANH OF THE PROBLEMS FACING

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JAMAICA AT THE BEGINNING OF 1974 ARE NEITHER UNIQUE AMONG DEVELOPING COUNTRIES NOR OF MANLEY'S OWN MAKING. THE LACK-LUSTER PERFORMANCE PROBABLY INDICATES THAT THE PNP DID NOT COME TO POWER WITH ANY MORE OF A CONCRETE PROGRAM THAN A PHILOSOPHICAL NOTION THAT SOME KIND OF "CHANGE" MUST BE WROUGHT. ASIDE FROM THE LAND REVALUATION SCHEME (WHICH HAD BEEN A RECOGNIZED NEED IN JAMAICA FOR SOME YEARS) AND THE IMPRACTICAL MOVES FOR GOVT EQUITY PARTICIPATION IN TWO BASIC INDUSTRIES - CEMENT AND FLOUR - VERY LITTLE ACTUAL "CHANGE" HAS BEEN BROUGHT AOUT. FURTHER, MANLEY AND HIS COLLEAGUES HAVE FAILED TO FACE SQUARELY JAMAICA'S NUMBER ONE LONG-RUN PROBLEM - POPULATION GROWTH. ALTHOUGH THE GOVERNMENT COMMITS SUBSTANTIAL RESOURCCES TO FAMILY PLANNING, NO MAJOR FIGURE HAS FIRMLY AND PERSISTENTLY COMMITTED HIS PRESTIGE TO THE PROGRAM'S URGENCY, NOR DO ANY APPEAR INCLINED TO TAKE SUCH A RISK.

12. RHETORIC: THE RHETORIC OF THE MANLEY GOVT, WHICH ACCOMPANIES EVERY GOVT PRONOUNCEMENT, HAS INCURRED A COST, PRIMARILY IN THE SERIOUS LOSS OF CONFIDENCE WITHIN THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY THAT HAS TAKEN PLACE SINCE MANLEY ASSUMED POWER. THIS NERVOUSNESS IS NOT A RESULT OF OBJECTIONS TO SPECIFIC MANLEY PROGRAMS, BUT RATHER RESULTS FROM UNCERTAINTY OVER WHAT HE MIGHT DO, OR SAY, NEXT. FEW HAVE COMPLAINED ABOUT PAYING HIGHER PROPERTY TAXES AND MOST UNDERSTAND THE EFFECTS OF BALANCE OF PAYMENTS STRAINS, BUT THERE IS A PERSISTNET AURA OF UNCERTAINTY ABOUT MANLEY'S ULTIMATE INTENTIONS, AND THE NAGGING AND HISTORICAL FEAR OF COMMUNISM, PERSONIFIED BY THE CUBAN AND CHINESE

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CINCLANT NORVA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 3 OF 3 KINGSTON 0290/3

CINCLANT FOR POLAD

CONNECTION AND THE ACTIONS OF THE PERIPATETIC DUDLEY THOMPSON.

13. THERE HAVE RECENTLY EMERGED SOME SIGNS THAT THE CABINET AND PNP EXECUTIVE IS NOT COMPLETELY UNITED BEHIND MANLEY ON ALL ISSUES, WITH SOME FACTIONS URGING HIM TO INSERT THE GOVERNMENT MORE QUICKLY INTO PRIVATE SECTOR ACTIVITIES. THE PNP HAS HISTORICALLY REPRESENTED A WIDE SPECTRUM OF POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC VIEWS AND INTERNAL STRUGGLE IS NOTHING NEW. MANLEY, HIMSELF, TENDS TO VACILLATE, AND TO TAKE THE ADVICE OF THE LATEST PERSON TO GAIN A HEARING. HE ALSO SUFFERS FROM AN INCREASING FRUSTRATION STEMMING FROM THE INABILITY OF HIS GOVERNMENT TO IMPLEMENT THE PROGRAMS HE BLITHELY ANNOUNCES. ALTHOUGH HE REMAINS IN ULTIMATE CHARGE AND OTHERS ARE LOATHE TO MOVE WITHOUT HIS SPECIFIC
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APPROVAL, HIS ABILITY TO AFFECT EVENTS IS SEVERELY CIRCUMSCRIBED BY THE SHORTAGE OF FINANCIAL AND HUMAN RESOURCES. WHILE THIS MAY HAVE A DELETERIOUS EFFECT ON THE OPERATIONS OF GOVERNMENT, IT ALSO OPERATES AS A RESTRAINT ON SOME OF MANLEY'S MORE UNWORKABLE PROGRAMS.

13. OPPOSITION. WITH THE EXCEPTION OF FINANCIAL AFFAIRS, THE OPPOSITION HAS NOT BEEN HELPFUL IN DEFINING ISSUES,

OR IN CRITICIZING GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES. THIS IS DUE LARGELY TO DISUNITY WITHIN THE JLP AND A STATE OF LOW MORALE AS A RESULT OF THE ELECTION DEFEAT. IT IS ALSO DUE TO CONSIDERABLE DISSATISFACTION, PARTICULARLY AMONG THE YOUNGER MENTERS, WITH THE LEADERSHIP OF HUGH SHEARER. WITH SEAGA ON A LEAVE OF ABSENCE FROM POLITICS AND THE YOUNGER LEADERSHIP NOT YET IN A POSITION EFFECTIVELY TO INFLUENCE PARTY POLICIES, THE OPPOSITION IS NOT LIKELY SERIOUSLY TO CHALLENGE THE PNP FOR SEVERAL YEARS, AND MAY NOT BE READY BY 1977. WHILE THE FEBRUARY 5 PARISH COUNCIL ELECTIONS WOULD APPEAR TO PROVIDE AN EXCELLENT OPPORTUNITY FOR THE PARTY TO SHOW SOME VIGOR, IT IS PROBABLY NOT SUFFICIENTLY ORGANIZED TO DO SO. FURTHER, IN THIS PERIOD OF ECONOMIC CRISIS, MANLEY SHOULD BE ABLE TO PREEMPT THE OPPOSITION BY RESORTING TO PATRIOTIC APPEALS AND THE NECESSITY FOR NATIONAL UNITY

14. OTHER POSSIBILITIES. WITH JAMAICA'S HIGH UNEMPLOYMENT RATE AND APPARENT INABILITY TO DEAL EFFECTIVELY WITH THE PROBLEM, IT WOULD SEEM LOGICAL THAT THE URBAN CHRONICALLY UNEMPLOYED WOULD BEGIN TO COALESCE AROUND SUCH PERSONALITIES AS TREVOR MUNROE. THUS FAR, THE ESTABLISHED SYSTEM HAS MANAGED TO EMBRACE SUCH DISSIDENCE AND THERE IS A CERTAIN AMOUNT OF TORPOR IN JAMAICA WHICH NO LEADER HAS BEEN ABLE TO FATHOM, ESPECIALLY WHEN DEALING WITH THE LOWEST ECONOMIC LEVELS OF THE SOCIETY. THIS IS NOT TO SAY THAT A MOVEMENT COULD NOT ARISE FROM THIS QUARTER, BUT IT IS UNLIKELY IN THE NEXT YEAR OR TWO.

15. THE FUTURE. THE FUEL CRISIS AND THE DAWNING REALIZATION

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TION THAT ITS COSTS TO JAMAICA WILL BE ALL BUT UNBEARABLE FOR JAMAICA'S MEAGER FOREIGN EXCHANGE EARNINGS HAVE VIRTUALLY EXTINGUISHED ANY HOPE OF IMPLEMENTING MANLEY'S MORE AMBITIOUS PROGRAMS. FACING AN INCREASED FUEL BILL OF J\$100 MILLION (ACCORDING TO MANLEY), THE GOVERNMENT'S PRIMARY CONCERN IS HOW (OR WHETHER) IT WILL BE ABLE TO AFFORD TO KEEP THE WHEELS OF INDUSTRY AND MOTORCARS ROLLING. JAMAICA'S EXPORTS ARE ALMOST TOTALLY UNRESPONSIVE TO DEMAND AND THERE IS NO HOPE OF EXPANDING PRODUCTION IN THE NEAR TERM TO COVER THE INCREASED FOREIGN EXCHANGE REQUIREMENT. MANLEY HAS BEEN AS FRANK AS POSSIBLE WITH HIS PEOPLE ON THIS QUESTION, BUT HAS BEEN UNABLE TO COME UP WITH ANY SOLUTION. HIS JUST COMPLETED TRIP TO LONDON, IN WHICH HE APPARENTLY ATTEMPTED TO SECURE A MORE FAVORABLE PRICE FOR JAMAICAN SUGAR AND BANANAS COULD NOT HAVE BEEN

MORE ILL-TIMED INVIEW OF BRITAIN'S OWN PROBLEMS
AND HE APPEARS TO HAVE RETURNED EMPTY-
HANDED. WHILE THE JAMAICAN GOVERNMENT HAS PLANS TO
NEGOTIATE A CONCESSIONAL PRICE FROM THE
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MANLEY IS DESPERATE, HOWEVER, AND, DESPITE THE
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LOSE CONTROL AND RESORT TO THAT LEAST NOURISHING OF
ALL BELLY-FILLERS- RHETORIC. HEWITT

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